

Evaluation of Blue Door's INNclusion Program for 2SLGBTQ+ Youth



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Agenda

Introduction

Research Question

Overview

Identity Based Programs

Blue Door INNclusion
Program

Methodology

Framework

Objectives

Data collection

Results

Conclusion

Recommendations

Introduction

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Research Coordinator, CAMH

[Back to Agenda Page](#)



Improving population-based housing programs

[Back to Agenda Page](#)

**How do we improve
2SLGBTQ+
population-based
housing programs
and ensure they
meet the needs of
2SLGBTQ+ youth?**

05

Overview



[Back to Agenda Page](#)

2SLGBTQ+ YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN CANADA

01



OUT OF HOME

2SLGBTQ+ youth experience homelessness at younger ages (Under 16 years old)

35,000 - 40,000

Young people experience homelessness across Canada

02



03



25 - 40%

8,750 - 16,000 identify as 2SLGBTQ+

URBAN AND SUBURBAN

This is not a "Big City Problem" 2SLGBTQ+ youth and young adults exist everywhere

04



**“The whole reason I
became homeless was
because I came out”**

- Stevie, 16 years
old



[Back to Agenda Page](#)

Factors that Impact 2SLGBTQ+ Youth Experiencing Homelessness

1 Leading cause of 2SLGBTQ+ youth homelessness:

- Identity-based family conflict resulting from a young person coming out



2 Additional Factors:

- Exiting public systems
- Racism
- Unstable employment
- Poverty

3

- Indigenous and racialized LGBTQ+ youth experience homelessness at disproportionate rates



4 Challenges & Barriers:

- Forced to choose between unsafe situations due to transphobia, biphobia, and homophobia
- Racialized transgender face the highest rates of discrimination and violence



5 Challenges & Barriers Cont'd:

- Increased risk of depression, anxiety, suicidality, PTSD and substance misuse



2SLGBTQ+ Housing Programs in Canada



York Region's First Supportive Housing for 2SLGBTQ+ Youth

"INnclusion is an inclusive environment that helps me feel safe and relaxed. Therefore I can complete more goals in my life including doing the Construct program and also access support with name and gender marker change."

- Jaime, INnclusion Participant

BLU DOOR
www.BlueDoor.ca



YMCA SPROTT HOUSE

Canada's first transitional housing program for LGBTQ2S youth



February 2016
YMCA SPROTT HOUSE OPENED as Canada's first transitional housing program designed specifically to meet the needs of LGBTQ2S youth.

Jointly funded by the YMCA AND THE CITY OF TORONTO

CAPACITY OF 25 BEDS

YMCA Sprott House aims to create a safe and affirming space for LGBTQ2S youth, while supporting residents increase their independence and ability to find appropriate and affordable housing in the community.

[Back to Agenda Page](#)

Blue Door INNclusion Program for 2SLGBTQ+ youth

Supportive housing program that provides:

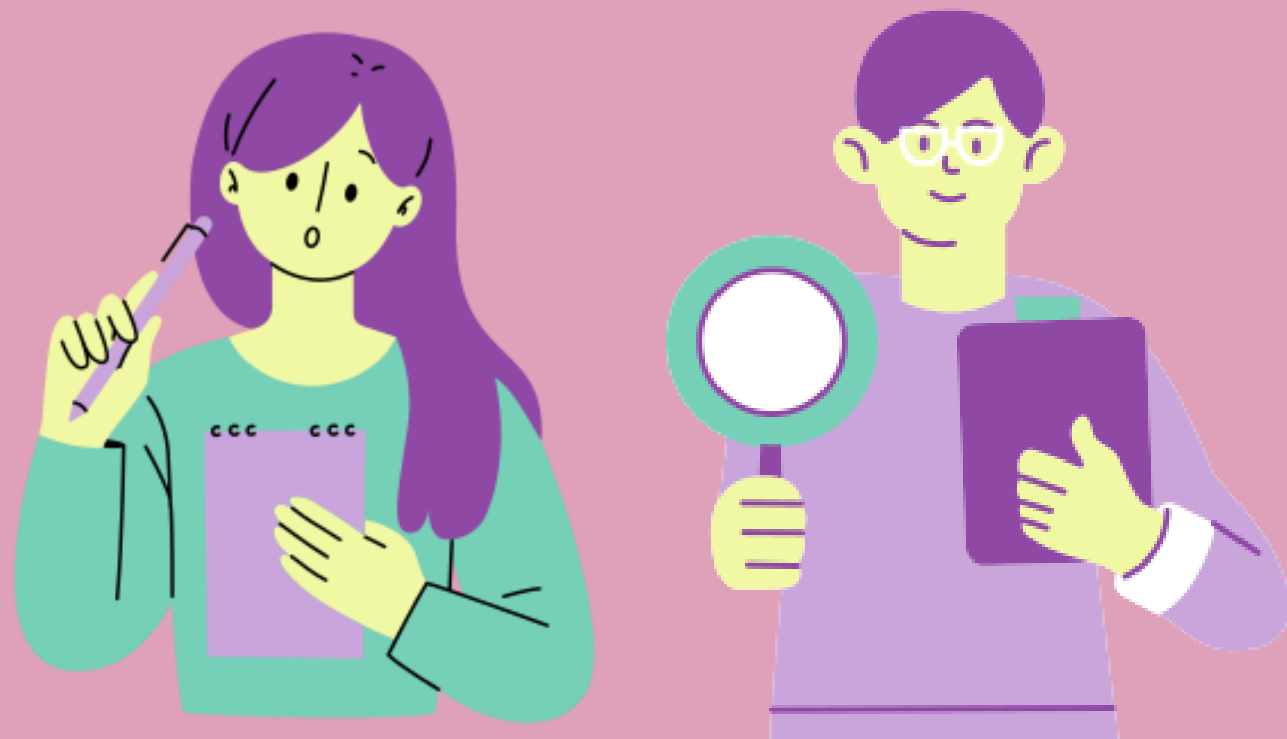
- Residential space in the community
- Access to transit, amenities, and a Peer Mentor
- A home to support & foster independent living
- 4 single occupancy bedrooms, 3 washrooms
- Pet friendly space for residents
- Flexible length of stay

[Back to Agenda Page](#)



08

Methodology



[Back to Agenda Page](#)

Developmental Evaluation Framework

[Back to Agenda Page](#)

Overview	Proponents
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeated cycles of data collection, feedback, reflection, and adaptation.• Feedback is looped back to the organization in a timely manner, allowing for findings and recommendations to be implemented quickly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We work closely with program residents and staff on an ongoing basis, while respecting and sustaining the independent nature of the program.• Interim reports are compiled 3 times per year and shared with program staff.• The PI meets with the Program Manager every 3-4 months to discuss findings and recommendations.

Objectives



Document the experiences and perspectives of program residents and staff.



Assess and measure changes in mental health, alcohol and substance use, community participation, housing stability, employment status, and school enrollment.



Determine the strengths and gaps of INNclusion programming, and provide recommendations to ensure that 2SLGBTQ+ youth will be able to transition into safe, stable, and independent housing.

[Back to Agenda Page](#)

Data Collection



External Key Informants

- One-on-one interviews (virtual) with youth and staff from 2SLGBTQ+ youth housing services across Canada

INNclusion Staff

- Focus group (in person) with 5 Blue Door staff
- Repeated one-on-one interviews (in person or virtual) with core program staff

INNclusion Youth

- Surveys and one-on-one interviews (in person & virtual) every 3-6 months while living at INNclusion and for 1 year after moving out
- Monthly check-in surveys (online) while living at INNclusion

Results

What is working?

- Safety/stability
- Housemate socialization
- Independent nature of program
- Evaluation and feedback process
- Affirming environment

Areas for improvement and additional support

- Mental health support
- Food security
- Access to physical & gender-affirming healthcare
- Additional staff
- Housing support post-INNclusion



[Back to Agenda Page](#)

Results: Changes over time

The majority of youth reported that their mental health is a concern.

All of the participants experienced moderate/severe anxiety.

Half of the participants scored in the severe - moderately severe ranges for depression.

The majority of youth reported experiencing some level of food insecurity across all time points.

Conclusion & Program Recommendations

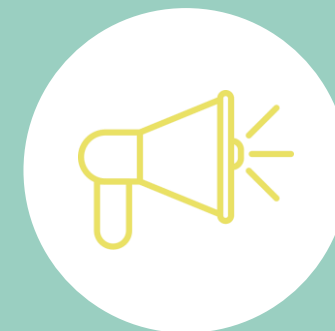


Implement regular feedback



Facilitate access to mental health supports

- Provide resources
- Crisis planning for youth



Ensure food security

- Readily available and accessible



Provide increased structured programming

[Back to Agenda Page](#)



General Recommendations

For programs delivering 2SLGBTQ+ inclusive services

- Include questions regarding pronouns, chosen name, gender identity, and sexual orientation on intake forms
- Respect and accept clients' chosen names and pronouns
- Ensure services include all-gender washrooms
- Equip services with 2SLGBTQ+ affirming resources
- Mandatory 2SLGBTQ+ training for all staff

[Back to Agenda Page](#)



“It’s been a long road, but it’s good, finally. It’s good to hang out with other trans people and having it be no big deal. Like the three of us just sat around the table and just sipped coffee and made breakfast together. [...] Having that connection and not having to worry about people not knowing who I am, or not coming out to them like 100 times”

- INNclusion Resident,
26 years old

[Back to Agenda Page](#)



Thank you!

Do you have any questions?